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Fiftieth session
Item 20 of the provisional agenda*

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

Letter dated 18 July 1995 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit enclosed herewith, a letter of 1 July 1995 from the participants in the second reunion of humanitarian aid donors-Yugoslav citizens and emigrants abroad (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 20 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Bratislav DJORDJEVIC
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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ANNEX

Allow us to inform you that the second reunion of humanitarian aid donors was held at Belgrade from 30 June to 2 July 1995, attended by 150 of us, Yugoslav citizens and emigrants from 13 European countries, the United States of America, Australia and Canada, representing numerous associations of Serbs and Montenegrins in diaspora. As I trust you are aware, our associations collect and deliver in an organized fashion humanitarian relief supplies to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and to the war-ridden areas, intended for the civilian population and refugees. In pursuing our humanitarian activities and during visits to our homeland, we are constantly confronted with the increasingly grave consequences of the lengthy sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, specifically in terms of the overall humanitarian and social situation, affecting the most vulnerable population categories, in particular children, the ill and the elderly, refugees and sufferers who have found refuge in the motherland and whose numbers have considerably grown after the exodus of Serbs from western Slavonia and the attacks on zones under United Nations protection.

Proceeding from the fact that these prolonged and inhumane sanctions seriously imperil the health and indeed the biological survival of the people that we ourselves belong to, who have, even under such circumstances, taken into their homes 94.8 per cent of the total number of refugees in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, irrespective of their national or religious affiliation, and from the fact that virtually all resources in the parent country have been exhausted and that humanitarian aid is by and large the only means of survival, we are addressing to you an appeal from this reunion to do everything in your power for the unjustified sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to be lifted as soon as possible.

In this context, we would also like to stress that, of late, humanitarian aid from principal international humanitarian organizations has been declining considerably, and that in fact none has been forthcoming from the Governments of some countries, whereby the humanitarian situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the war-ridden areas has been yet further exacerbated. In this connection, may we also appeal on you to do your best for humanitarian relief from these sources to be increased.

Faced with great difficulties, and having to wait for a long time to be issued the required United Nations permits to deliver humanitarian aid to our country, we are kindly asking you to take all measures at your disposal for the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 724 (1991) concerning Yugoslavia to expedite to the maximum its procedures in deciding our applications related to humanitarian aid deliveries.

We are convinced that you will appreciate our concern for our nation, our families, our relatives and our friends in the country, who have in no way contributed to this situation, in which they are exposed to vast suffering. Confident of your principled attitude and consistent upholding of the tenets of humanitarian law and of proclaimed human rights enshrined in accepted international documents, as well as of your personal goodwill and humaneness, may we ask you once again to favourably consider our justified demands and take measures for their accommodation.

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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION

COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

SUPPORT BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM OF THE EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENTS TO PROMOTE AND CONSOLIDATE NEW OR RESTORED DEMOCRACIES

AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 17 July 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

As we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, I have the honour to refer to the inherent relationship among democracy, peace and sustainable development, and to the importance of this relationship in advancing the ideals expressed in the Charter of the United Nations.

The interdependence among democracy, peace and sustainable development is well known. In your address before the San Francisco ceremony commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter you said: "Democratization can balance the individual's need for identity with the need for a workable international system: it can help to prevent conflict; it is vital for development."

Most democratic countries enjoy the highest levels of social and economic development in the world. The relationship, however, is not unidirectional. In

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countries which enjoy democratic freedoms, sustainable development has played a key role in allowing democracy to take root and flourish.

The existence of democratic societies has also contributed greatly to the advancement of world peace. Modern history has demonstrated that democracies do not wage war upon democracies.

Peace, democracy and sustainable development form a triangle in which each side reinforces and is reinforced by the other two. As the United Nations rededicates itself to the ideals set forth in the Charter half a century ago, its efforts to realize these ideals can be facilitated by activities which build upon and enhance the interrelationship among democracy, sustainable development and peace.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 10, 29, 41 and 101 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Gad YAACOBI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Israel
to the United Nations

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EDUCATION AND INFORMATION FOR DISARMAMENT

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 16 December 1993, the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/64, entitled "Education and information for disarmament", in which the Assembly expressed its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports submitted pursuant to resolutions 44/123 and 46/27; invited Member States and international governmental and non-governmental organizations and educational institutions for peace and disarmament to redouble their efforts to respond to the appeal made in paragraph 106 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly and to submit to the Secretary-General a report on their activities in that regard; and requested the Secretary-General to submit those reports to the Assembly at its fiftieth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, the Secretary-General, in a note verbale dated 15 March 1995, requested Member States to provide the relevant information by 30 April 1995. The information received from Governments is reproduced in section II below. Any additional information received from Member States will be issued as addenda to the present report.

3. In addition, letters dated 15 March 1995 requesting information on disarmament education were sent to international governmental organizations concerned with the subject. The only reply received to date is contained in section III below.

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

CUBA

[Original: Spanish]

[10 May 1995]

1. Activities related to education and information for disarmament are vital for achieving the increasingly high goals pursued in the area of disarmament and international security.

2. In this respect, Cuba has been making a serious and intensive effort which has so far yielded very encouraging results in fostering a better understanding of disarmament issues among officials, military experts, professionals and the population at large. Some examples of the most important activities are given below.

(a) Establishment of a Centre for Disarmament and International Security Studies within the Ministry of the Armed Forces. The Centre, which at present includes over 20 military experts in disarmament and international security, prepares medium- and long-term studies on these issues and participates in workshops, seminars and other special national or international events. Its specialists serve as research advisers for theses, diploma studies, and research papers or as members of thesis or dissertation committees. The Centre offers postgraduate courses for the training of other specialists in disarmament and

international security and establishes working relationships with other related institutions and international bodies. Cuba believes that all these efforts to promote discussion and study of disarmament and international security issues within the armed forces of the country contribute significantly to making the military better informed and providing specialized training in this important sector of society, which is involved in a very direct way in making and implementing Cuba's disarmament policy.

(b) Teaching of subjects relating to international treaties on disarmament, and in particular with respect to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction in different higher education courses. For example, in the University of Havana alone the following postgraduate courses were offered in 1994:

(i) Course in biological safety and the Convention on biological weapons for microbiology laboratory technicians (20 hours/December 1994);

(ii) Course in biological safety and the Convention on biological weapons for graduates in microbiology, biochemistry, biology, medicine and related field (40 hours/December 1994-January 1995). During the 1993/94 academic year, in the Faculty of Biology of the University of Havana, various master's theses, undergraduate papers and other research work were written dealing from various perspectives with questions related to the Convention on biological weapons.

(c) The Veterinary Centre for Disaster Preparedness is engaged in an important experiment in the area of information and education for disarmament. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate training to veterinarians and related professionals under a programme which includes the study of the basic provisions contained in the Convention on biological weapons and the Convention on chemical weapons. Since its establishment, the Centre has provided undergraduate training to 1,691 students and postgraduate training to 871 professionals. Among the study materials used by the Centre are textbooks that include specific chapters on the above-mentioned conventions.

(d) Lectures on disarmament and international security by specialists from the National Defence College.

(e) Preparation and publication of papers in the national press aimed at making the general public better informed about the more important disarmament issues.

(f) In 1995 (14-16 March), Cuba hosted the Regional Seminar on the National Implementation of the Convention on Chemical Weapons, in which over 20 countries and international institutions participated. Broad national coverage of the issues was provided in the press and through round-table discussions, interviews, etc. In addition, the various national bodies involved with such questions were well represented at the seminar.

ESTONIA

[Original: English]

[22 May 1995]

1. The territory of Estonia was occupied for a long time by the forces of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and, since 1992, by the forces of the Russian Federation. Based upon international law, Estonia sought by peaceful means the withdrawal of those forces. The withdrawal of the Russian forces was accomplished by 31 August 1994. As a result, over 700 military installations have been closed. All military airports have been abandoned and all offensive weapons have been returned to the Russian Federation. Estonia has been effectively disarmed.

2. The attributes of an independent country are its defence forces and, in keeping with this tradition, Estonia has built up a minimal defence structure, currently consisting of 5,300 men.

3. During the years of foreign occupation, a strong sentiment against military service was born, which developed into a popular movement during the years from 1988 to 1991. Therefore, we feel that there are no reasons to start a new national campaign for disarmament.

4. Estonia is deeply interested in disarmament affairs and hopes that its neighbours will proceed with their declared disarmament programmes as rapidly as possible.

JAPAN

[Original: English]

[28 April 1995]

1. The Government of Japan is committed to incorporating into the elementary and junior high school social studies curriculum and the high school civics curriculum instruction on the need for world peace and the principles of peace embodied in the Japanese Constitution.

2. Specifically, sixth grade social studies classes are taught about the role of the United Nations for the realization of peace throughout the international community. Students are also taught about the importance of world peace and Japan's important role in the world. Such questions as what actions the United Nations can take in addressing issues facing mankind, for example, restricting nuclear weapons, are discussed.

3. In the junior high school civics curriculum, students are encouraged to deepen their understanding of the pacificism embodied in Japan's Constitution and to consider issues relating to the security and defence of Japan. Attention is given to the threat of nuclear weapons, and students are encouraged to

develop a strong sense of the need to cooperate for the prevention of war and the establishment of world peace.

4. The senior high school civics curriculum focuses on an understanding of such issues as those relating to nuclear weapons and disarmament in the promotion of world peace, and seeks to instil an appreciation for the significance of the solidarity of humankind throughout the international community; students are encouraged to consider Japan's role and the way of life as a Japanese citizen in the international context.

5. In addition, in political and economics civics classes, students are taught about Japan's position and role in contributing to world peace and the welfare of humankind, as well as about issues of concern to the international community, such as those relating to disarmament, population and ethnicity.

6. There are no non-governmental organizations dealing exclusively with education and public information on disarmament issues.

III. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

[Original: English]

[16 May 1995]

1. Although the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is not directly concerned with disarmament education and information, its new culture of peace programme concerns itself with the general transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace, which must include disarmament.

2. The 1st Consultative Meeting of the Culture of Peace Programme, which was held at UNESCO headquarters from 27 to 29 September 1994, recommended that the programme include in its tasks the promotion of a peace economy. The report of the meeting stated:

> "The military-industrial complex is the latest in a long series of institutions of war that have provided economic power and profit. Why not an 'industry of peace', in which peace is a profitable enterprise and an 'attractive' alternative? In order to convert a military-based economy to a civilian one, all of the components of the military-industrial complex must be addressed and alternatives found for them.
>
> "As the transition to a culture of peace proceeds, resources formerly drained by the culture of war will be allocated to human development and social programmes, promoting education, tolerance, respect for cultural identities and an end to the arms trade."

3. The Culture of Peace Programme seeks to link its efforts with other international organizations dedicated to disarmament through the programme's information and networking system. As part of its information and networking services, the programme takes part in forums such as the meeting of the Special Non-Governmental Organization Committee for Disarmament, which took place at UNESCO on 24 February 1995. The forum recognized the programme as an integral part of the disarmament movement, concluding that the culture of peace initiative was an important new approach, which had the potential to contribute to conflict prevention as well as post-conflict peace-building.

4. UNESCO and the Organization of American States organized the Inter-American Symposium on Security for Peace on 3 and 4 April 1995, which was also of relevance in the context of cooperation with other international organizations.

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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 16 December 1993, the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/83, entitled "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security". In that resolution the General Assembly invited Member States to submit their views on the question of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, particularly in the light of recent positive developments in the global political and security climate, and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its fiftieth session on the basis of the replies received.

2. Pursuant to the request of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, in a note verbale dated 20 March 1995, invited all Member States to provide the relevant information by 31 May 1995. Replies received are reproduced in section II of the report. Any additional information received from Member States will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

HONDURAS

[Original: Spanish]

[22 June 1995]

A. The Armed Forces of Honduras wish to state the following in this regard:

1. Honduras recognizes the validity of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security and has participated in regional and global meetings at which it has urged other countries to do likewise, thereby respecting the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

2. Honduras also states categorically that it refrains from resorting to the use or threat of force, aggression, intervention, interference, terrorism in any form, repression, foreign occupation or measures of political or economic coercion in violation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and security of other States or of the permanent sovereignty of peoples over their own resources.

3. Honduras maintains an ongoing dialogue with other democratic nations to strengthen ties of mutual friendship and cooperation.

4. Since 9 September 1992, it has participated in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) by providing 14 military observers. On 19 March 1995, it sent a military contingent of 120 men to the Republic of Haiti in the context of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), thereby becoming the first Central American country to participate in this type of activity.

5. Pursuant to the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, Honduras has reduced its Armed Forces, whose aims are confined to defending the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic, keeping the peace, maintaining law and order, upholding the Constitution and the principles of free suffrage and multi-party eligibility for the office of President of the Republic, and cooperating with the executive branch in activities related to literacy training, education, agriculture, natural resource conservation, road management, communications, public health, agrarian reform and states of emergency.

B. Below is a list of agreements, treaties and conventions signed by the Republic of Honduras:

1. Agreement on a resolution establishing a Central American democratic community, 19 January 1982.

2. Constituent Treaty of the Central American Parliament and other political institutions, 2 October 1987.

3. Guidelines for a framework agreement on trade and investment between the Republic of Venezuela and the Republics of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, 16 July 1991.

4. Joint Declaration on Peace between the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama and the Government of Chile.

5. Treaty on Central American Security.

6. Convention on arms limitation, concluded by the Central American countries on 7 February 1923.

7. Treaty on the avoidance of war through non-aggression and conciliation, 10 October 1993.

8. Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, 5 August 1963.

9. Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, 14 February 1967.

10. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 1 July 1968.

11. Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, 16 February 1971.

12. Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), 23 December 1979.

13. Agreement on the regulation of international military traffic on the emergency military highway, 15 December 1942.

14. General treaty on peace, friendship, defensive alliance, trade, extradition, receipt of documents, professional titles, etc., 31 March 1878.

15. Law on foreign consular missions.

16. Convention regulating the unified Central American consular service, 5 February 1912.

17. Agreement on cooperation in developing and exploiting the forest reserves of Olancho, 21 June 1979.

18. Declaration of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 18 December 1986.

19. Agreement on the Establishment and Operation of the Central American Defence Council, 14 December 1963.

20. Protocol of amendment to the temporary provisions of the Charter of the Organization of Central American States (OCAS), 13 December 1967.

21. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Honduras and the Government of the United States of America on a radar installation, 7 April 1989.

22. Joint declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Honduras and the Argentine Republic in reaffirmation of their faith in the Organization of American States (OAS), 27 November 1964.

23. Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Governments members of the Organization of Central American States (OCAS) on economic and technical assistance, 30 October 1965.

24. Joint declaration of Brazil and Honduras stating their intention to pursue efforts to strengthen the mechanisms of the Organization of American States (OAS), 17 July 1971.

25. Agreement on mutual cooperation between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Honduras to combat the production of and illicit trafficking in drugs, 14 November 1988.

26. United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 20 December 1988.

27. Regional Cooperation Agreement on the Eradication of Illicit Trafficking in Drugs, 3 April 1990.

28. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, 11 December 1946.

29. General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration, 13 December 1960.

30. American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (Pact of Bogotá), 30 April 1948.

31. Agreement for the settlement of border disputes between Honduras and El Salvador, 24 June 1962.

32. Commitment by Honduras and El Salvador to submit border and territorial disputes to the International Court of Justice, 24 May 1986.

33. Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (second Geneva Convention), 12 August 1949.

34. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Honduras and the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migrations (ICEM), 28 March 1978.

35. Protocol 1 to the bilateral agreement on military aid between the Government of Honduras and the Government of the United States of America, 20 May 1954.

36. Bilateral agreement on military aid between the Government of Honduras and the Government of the United States of America, 20 May 1954.

37. Protocol 2 to the bilateral agreement on military aid of 20 May 1954 between the Government of Honduras and the Government of the United States of America concerning the conduct of CINJ military manoeuvres and exercises, 14 November 1988.

38. Memorandum of understanding between the Government of the Republic of Honduras and the Government of the United States of America for the integration of the RED/RADAR/C radar facilities located on the Cerro La Mole.

LEBANON

[Original: Arabic]

[31 May 1995]

1. The end of the cold war has given the world a chance to free itself from the dangers of polarization into two camps.

2. The cold war caused serious reverses in giving effect to agreements reached immediately following the end of the Second World War. At that time, the peoples of the world hoped for a new era governed by international covenants and international law, as embodied in the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

3. Although a number of years have now passed since the end of the cold war, the world is still not in an ideal situation. It is rather the case that many latent ethnic and political problems have suddenly emerged and have caused acute, bloody and devastating crises, some of whose consequences the United Nations is endeavouring to address without, in many cases, being destined to succeed.

4. Small countries and developing countries find themselves in a difficult situation with respect to their international relations owing to the practice of disregard for international law and because the national interests of politically and economically powerful countries are placed before the legitimate interests of others.

5. Violations of the principles of the Charter and of United Nations resolutions, particularly the resolutions of the Security Council, are often a source of tension and of crises that jeopardize regional and international peace and security.

6. Lebanon itself suffers from such a situation because of regional factors relating to the Arab-Israeli conflict and as a result of the continued Israeli occupation of parts of southern Lebanon and the Western Bekaa.

7. More than 17 years have elapsed since the Israeli incursion into southern Lebanon of March 1978. Despite the adoption by the Security Council of its resolution 425 (1978), calling upon Israel to withdraw forthwith from all Lebanese territory and establishing the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for the purpose of assisting the Government of Lebanon to extend its authority over all Lebanese territory and to ensure law and order, Israel has continued to insist on maintaining its occupation of an area of Lebanon to which it has given the name "the security zone".

8. The Israeli occupation is in open defiance of international law, of all notions of national sovereignty, of the obligations assumed by States Members of the United Nations and of the provisions of the Organization's Charter.

9. The Israeli occupation causes many hardships and difficulties for Lebanese citizens with respect to the security of their homes and property, and their lives are daily placed in jeopardy by the shelling and bombardment of villages and towns by the Israelis for the purpose of strengthening their control and perpetuating the occupation. The occupation forces also impose blockades on the villages of the south, and the maritime blockade of the coast of southern Lebanon imposed several months ago is currently being maintained without any measures being taken to deter Israel from this act of aggression directed against a State Member of the United Nations and against the security of its citizens and the source of their livelihood.

10. The state of tension in the Middle East region is exacerbated by the existence of an Israeli nuclear armament programme that has produced more than 200 nuclear warheads and that poses a serious threat to the security of the region and its inhabitants and to international peace and security in general. Israel's leaders give no indication that they are prepared to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or to place their nuclear

programmes under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and this leaves no room for any assurance that they have no hostile intentions towards the region and its peoples.

11. Lebanon, having joined the Middle East peace process that began at Madrid in 1991, reaffirms its commitment to a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), in accordance with the framework for the peace process.

12. Lebanon was one of the small countries that were among the founders of the United Nations and that pinned their greatest hopes on the creation of an international order governed by respect for the sovereignty of States and the principles of international law. It is now one of those that have been most seriously harmed by constant disregard for the provisions and principles of the Charter and by the flagrant violation of the resolutions of the Security Council, in particular its resolution 425 (1978). The Lebanese Government supports international efforts to promote the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. Events since its adoption in 1970 have demonstrated that mankind must be guided by its principles if it is to be spared a multitude of crises and catastrophes.

UKRAINE

[Original: Russian]

[21 July 1995]

1. The implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security is of particular importance for the establishment of a new world order. Not a single one of the Declaration's 27 paragraphs has lost its timeliness. What is more, today as never before, the possibility exists for the full implementation of its provisions in the practical conduct of States. This is promoted by such factors as the end of ideological confrontation, the ever-growing recognition that war is unacceptable as a means of settling disputes, and the emergence of a broad awareness of the comprehensive and indivisible nature of security.

2. International security must be identical for all States in all its dimensions: military and political, social and economic, scientific and technical and humanitarian. No State today can ensure its own security by national means alone. Many security issues can be resolved only on a multilateral basis through collective effort. The ever-growing interdependence of our world is intensifying the international character of many phenomena in the life of the international community, including the content of such concepts as national security, which can be guaranteed only by coordinating the efforts of States.

3. At the international level, the United Nations has a pivotal role to play in ensuring reliable security. The United Nations system continues to be a major force for the peaceful development of all peoples, the settlement of

international disputes and the solution of the most pressing problems of individual countries and whole regions.

4. In the changed circumstances of today's world, security must be guaranteed by political means, through consultation and cooperation, especially within the framework of the United Nations and its agencies. There is a need for joint efforts to promote the establishment of the new international order, which will be based on values that are common to all mankind and on the accepted principles of international law, without any State imposing its will or overweening hegemony.

5. Of great significance in ensuring Ukraine's national security are the measures for disarmament, confidence-building and all-round cooperation in conditions of peace, good-neighbourliness and mutual understanding which are being pursued in the region covered by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, such as the inviolability of frontiers, the renunciation of territorial claims on other States, and guarantees for the rights of national minorities are the conditions sine qua non for the strengthening of national and international security.

6. Ukraine believes that OSCE is an important instrument for preventive diplomacy. Because of its geographical scope, this organization can be one of the most effective means of averting conflicts or settling them at an early stage in their development. Especially in this area, a place and a role must be sought for OSCE in the future structure of European security.

7. Ukraine attaches great importance to increasing its participation in the implementation of measures to strengthen international, regional and national security undertaken within OSCE and under bilateral and multilateral international agreements. Tangible evidence of this is the proclamation by Ukraine of its non-nuclear status, its ratification of the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Weapons (START I), the fact that Ukraine has already begun to fulfil the obligations laid down in the latter agreement, its accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its participation in the NATO "Partnership for Peace" programme.

8. The establishment of zones of lasting peace, stability, security and cooperation has an important place among the factors promoting international security. Ukraine favours the establishment of such a zone in the Mediterranean region. The settlement of the long-standing conflict in the Balkans is thus of great importance in this process.

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STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES OR REGIONS

Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to resolution 49/21 F of 20 December 1994 on assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti. It provides a brief description of the progress made in the implementation of that resolution.

II. GENERAL SITUATION

2. The Republic of Djibouti is strategically situated in the Horn of Africa at the juncture of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. It has a coastline of 370 kilometres and common borders with Eritrea in the north, Ethiopia in the west and south and Somalia in the south-east. The country covers an area of 23,000 kilometres characterized by an arid climate and extremely limited water and agricultural potential. Annual rainfall averages only 130 millimetres and there is no significant food production.

3. The country's population is estimated at 520,000 according to the 1991 census. With an annual natural growth rate estimated at 3.1 per cent, the

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population is projected to double in 22 years. In addition, the presence of a large refugee and displaced population from neighbouring countries has placed enormous strain on the meagre resources available. The total number of refugees and displaced persons is not known and estimates range from 100,000 to 150,000. The majority of Djiboutians are from the Afar and Issa ethnic groups; the other groups are Yemeni Arabs and French.

4. The population is mostly urban and is concentrated in the capital. This high urban concentration has led to many economic and social problems. In terms of human development, Djibouti is ranked, according to the Human Development Report 1994, 163 among the 173 countries reviewed. According to that report, the adult literacy rate is no more than 19 per cent, while the life expectancy at birth is one of the lowest in the world (48 years). Women play an active role in the economy and constitute 32.2 per cent of the labour force. In the formal urban sector, they are employed mainly as clerical or administrative staff and in rural areas they play an important role in livestock raising.

5. The economy is dual and is characterized by an important informal sector directed towards customers with a low purchasing power, and by a modern economy based on a solid port and airport infrastructure, serving a population with a high purchasing power but almost strictly dependent on imports.

6. Djibouti enjoys one of the most liberal economic regimes in Africa. Its currency is freely convertible and there are no controls on capital movement.

7. Because of a lack of natural resources, the economy of Djibouti is based on services, which contribute about 70 per cent of the country's gross domestic product, while the agricultural and industrial sectors remain very small. Djibouti enjoys a relative comparative advantage in the region because of its efficient port infrastructure, banking establishments, telecommunications facilities and to a certain extent the airport and the railroad link up to Ethiopia.

8. Owing to the political instability in the region and the resulting decline in goods and services, the economy has been declining in the past few years. Since all g[illegible] are imported and there are few exports, Djibouti has a structural trad[illegible] deficit and the overall budget is covered in part by external aid.

9. The real gross domestic product grew on average by 4 per cent over the period 1988-1992, fuelled in part by a surge in port activity resulting from the civil war and in part by the transit of massive food aid to the hinterland of Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia. The armed conflict in the north and south-west, which forced most of the country's development projects to a brutal halt, coupled with the dire socio-political situations prevailing in Ethiopia and Somalia, accelerated markedly the deterioration of Djibouti's economy.

10. At the social level, conditions of life are very difficult, characterized by poor nutrition as a result of low purchasing power, poor health, with widespread diseases such as tuberculosis and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), inadequate educational facilities and limited qualified manpower. Above all, unemployment and urban overpopulation constitute critical problems, which

are exacerbated by the presence of the large number of refugees from neighbouring countries.

11. According to available data, more than 40 per cent of the health services are given to foreigners who are attracted to the proximity and the quality of Djibouti's hospitals and health centres. With the recent conflicts in the Horn of Africa, refugees (mostly from Ethiopia and Somalia) have increased the number of non-Djiboutians who benefit from the national health services. The health services are free for both nationals and refugees, and with the increasing numbers of beneficiaries, the health system is no longer able to provide adequate services to the entire population. Moreover, the armed conflicts in the north of the country have caused physical damages to the health infrastructures.

12. The national education system consists of six years of primary education, four years of lower secondary education and three years of secondary general education.

13. Djibouti's primary eduction is presently provided by a network of 64 public and 9 private schools. Of the 33,005 children who were in primary schools in 1994, 29,715 were enrolled in public schools and 3,290 in private Koranic schools. Student-teacher ratios in primary schools range from 34-43:1 in the rural areas and are higher, at about 46:1 in the city. Student classroom ratios range from 35-81:1 and average at about 65:1. Some schools with large numbers of students are forced to deal with the problem by holding double shifts, a practice which may have to be extended if the growing demand for public education cannot be met by increasing investment in more schools.

14. The employment situation is closely linked to the educational sector of the country. Each year, more than 4,000 young people arrive on the labour market without any qualification, having had no access to a general secondary education or to any kind of professional training. The number is expected to grow within the next few years, particularly in the capital, Djibouti. The labour market is disproportionate because of the unbalanced structure of the Djiboutian economy.

15. It is estimated that more than 80 per cent of the enterprises are within the informal and semi-informal sector, including a large number of informed micro-enterprises, which play a key role in the economy of the country.

III. OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

16. The recent changes in the region, particularly the collapse of the old regime in Ethiopia, the independence of Eritrea and the civil war in Somalia, have affected Djibouti, which has also experienced in the past few years its own internal strife between the Government and opposition groups.

17. The political negotiation initiated shortly after the multi-party presidential elections of April 1993 culminated in the official signature of a national Peace and Reconciliation Accord. The main provisions of this agreement further confirm the Government's willingness to associate FRUD (the rebel group) and all opposition groups in the democratization process.

18. In order to create an environment of peace and social stability, the Government has initiated a process of demobilization of soldiers, whose numbers increased from several thousand to up to 20,000. This process may take some time, as opportunities to reintegrate the demobilized population into civilian life are not readily apparent and need to be explored in the overall context of the rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes.

19. The Government's present thinking is to provide each demobilized soldier with a financial allowance, which would facilitate the demobilization process. This would, however, require a substantial amount of cash, which may not be available in view of the budget deficit spurred by the war efforts and the decline in government revenues.

20. The burden of the war effort, combined with a swelling civilian wage bill, further depressed the country's financial situation. Faced with financial obligations largely exceeding its capacity, the Government turned to once cash-rich public enterprises and drew heavily on their reserves, to the point of depletion. As this internal source of financing is drying up, the volume of external aid, which had been significant, is now on a downward trend.

21. According to the World Bank, the 1993 budget deficit stood at an alarming 12 per cent of the gross domestic product. Despite a slight improvement in 1994, the budget deficit is likely to widen as a direct result of a sustained decrease in fiscal and non-fiscal revenues brought about by mounting inflationary pressures spurred by excessive borrowing from the banks. All this will culminate in fewer revenue being collected, which in turn will render the reimbursement of cumulated arrears (projected to reach 25 billion Djibouti francs in 1995) all the more problematic. A worsening current account position (10 per cent of the gross domestic product in 1993) compounds the overall situation of the economy.

22. The root causes of Djibouti's problems are economic. These are in part structural and in part compounded by continuous inflows of refugees from neighbouring countries affected by war or civil strife. The country's frail economy is able to absorb less than 60 per cent of the workforce and most of those employed earn only subsistence wages. Consequently, most of the peoples of Djibouti are poor and poverty is increasing because of diminishing trade links with Ethiopia and Somalia.

23. The overall situation of the country is also characterized by limited pasture land and a high rate of livestock mortality. If there is no rainfall in the near future, the ground-water level will be reduced, resulting in a shortage of drinking water. Given the increasing influx of immigrants and refugees into Djibouti, the need for water is increasing. In the town of Djibouti, with 65 per cent of the total population, the water points in certain coastal areas have reached a high degree of salinity and imperil the agro-pastoral perimeters that were developed a few years ago. The drought is therefore not only the result of climatic change but it is also structural to the extent that it is aggravated by overexploitation and consumption of scare water resources. The situation was exacerbated by the internal conflicts and the resultant displacement of the rural populations, who are confined in remote areas with no

pasture for their livestock. They are now receiving food assistance from the national army.

24. With regard to social conditions, Djibouti is facing a serious health situation, with widely prevalent epidemic diseases. There are 3,000 new cases of tuberculosis every year, and malaria is on the increase. Sexually transmitted diseases are also increasing, signalling a situation that is difficult to control. Malnutrition continues to be a major public health problem, particularly in the prevailing situation of economic crisis and pressures from refugees and displaced persons.

IV. MAJOR ISSUES

25. The situation in Djibouti has been adversely affected by the evolving critical situation in the Horn of Africa, the presence of tens of thousands of refugees and persons displaced from their countries, the extremes of local climate and cyclical droughts, torrential rains and floods such as those that occurred in 1989, and the extremely limited financial capacity of the country to implement reconstruction and development programmes.

26. In addition, fighting between the Government and armed opposition groups in the northern part of the country resulted in a large displacement of the civilian population. It also resulted in the recruitment of 12,000 soldiers who must now be demobilized and reintegrated into civilian life.

27. The Government of Djibouti has expressed a strong desire for the demobilization of 11,500 soldiers. The idea of demobilization started in early 1994 when the Government announced that security problems were under control in the previously war-affected areas. So far, steps have been taken to prepare for the separation from the national army of 11,500 soldiers enrolled during the two-year conflict. The demobilization includes new recruits and soldiers who were enrolled during the hostilities.

28. Although the Government has undertaken to pay separation fees for the demobilized soldiers, it is unlikely that the demobilization process can proceed without external support. Given the need for a large reconstruction scheme, food aid will be an incentive for the former soldiers and displaced persons to participate in rehabilitation activities involving the basic infrastructure, such as wells, health units and schools.

29. Djibouti has become a refugee host country. The increasing number of displaced persons and refugees, combined with the continuous flow of illegal immigrants in search of jobs and assistance, has become a matter of great concern to the Government.

30. Although there are no precise figures on the number of refugees, internally displaced persons and illegal immigrants, the Government believes that there are over 100,000 persons who are in need of assistance in the town of Djibouti alone. It also claims that an equal number are affected by the drought.

31. Djibouti suffers from recurrent droughts. The first rains of 1994 started late in the southern parts of the country, while the northern region has not seen rain for over two years. Despite a normal rainfall in 1995, water sources remain low, resulting in the migration of people to the capital.

32. Food requirements are met mostly through food imports, averaging some 60,000 tons of cereals annually. Djibouti's normal structural food aid requirement stands at about 18,000 tons. The World Food Programme (WFP) will provide some 7,000 tons, primarily to refugees from Somalia, but also to Djiboutian schoolchildren, orphans and hospital patients and participants in food for work schemes.

33. The health situation has immediate and long-term implications. The Government is providing medical services not only to its own people but also to a large number of refugees from Ethiopia and Somalia seeking free medical treatment in Djibouti. Those refugees also bring with them diseases such as tuberculosis. While the immediate need is to strengthen the country's capacity to address the problems of tuberculosis, malaria, AIDS and malnutrition through immunization campaigns and the provision of essential drugs, a longer-term solution must be found at the regional level to improve the health situation in the neighbouring countries.

34. Djibouti's educational system, which is modelled on the French system, is currently under pressure to meet the challenges of growing unemployment, a rising demand from a young population and a large influx of refugees.

35. With very high drop-out rates of about 10 per cent per annum for the last two grades of primary school and an estimated drop-out rate of over 30 per cent at the end of the primary cycle, it is not surprising that only about 27 per cent of those completing primary education gain a place in secondary school. That high level of attrition at a stage when continuing learning is both optimal and desirable represents, from an educational and manpower planning perspective, a wasted national opportunity to expand and strengthen the human resource pool for the enhancement of national productivity. Improvement in the overall quality of both primary and secondary education will require tackling the internal inefficiencies in the existing system and improving services in keeping with the nation's need for an educational content responsive to the changes occurring in the national market economy.

36. Technical and vocational education in Djibouti is also modelled on the French system and begins at the secondary-school level. Opportunities of a limited and very specific kind exist for some students to pursue professional training. Clearly, there is an ongoing need to give the issue of growing national unemployment, especially among school drop-outs and youths, the urgent attention it deserves.

37. No active employment policies have been elaborated owing to the weak institutional capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Professional Training. The challenge, in terms of employment, is to be able to design a system that would target the unemployed according to the different categories: unskilled, school drop-outs, demobilized soldiers, refugees and women.

V. ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

38. One characteristic of the operational activities of the United Nations system in Djibouti is the sustained and close collaboration of all United Nations agencies present in the country to coordinate their efforts in order to respond to the growing social and economic problem of the refugees. The refugee situation in Djibouti is affecting not only general security but also the health sector and sanitation. Djibouti's health infrastructure, although not greatly developed, is accessible to all the local population. The inflow of refugees from neighbouring countries affected by war who are benefiting from the health services has contributed to placing a heavy burden on the already weak public-health infrastructure. That situation has also contributed to a deterioration of the environment and of the sanitation facilities in the country, especially in the capital, and resulted in an outbreak of cholera in July 1993.

39. The organizations of the United Nations system present in Djibouti are constantly dealing with that problem by developing activities related to repatriation, food distribution and education, by initiating regrouping efforts to resettle refugees in camps and by clean-up operations in the capital.

40. Activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) during the past year were concentrated on the identification, formulation and approval of a limited number of priority projects and on the management of ongoing projects.

41. A major accomplishment of UNDP has been the identification of a new role for the private sector, now considered by the Government and the donor community as one of the main engines for economic and social development. In 1993, UNDP played a leading role in that regard by encouraging the institutional reform and restructuring of private-sector legislation through a reshaping of Djibouti's code of commerce, which covers fiscality, the investment code, work legislation and investment promotion, etc. To that end, US$ 500,000 was made available from the UNDP Management Development Programme.

42. Protection of the environment has also been an important aspect of UNDP's agenda. A disaster management workshop was held in October 1993 and a national workshop on sustainable development and environmental management was held in December 1993. Both workshops helped to identify national needs and to develop a strategy for the development of new legislation.

43. UNDP led the United Nations Inter-Agency Assessment Mission to Djibouti in April 1994. The Mission's findings and recommendations are expected to form the basis for full-scale reactivation of technical assistance in support of the Government's efforts in the challenging task of reconstruction and development. Essentially, the Mission recommended three actions: a relief programme consisting of food, water and essential drugs for 35,000 to 40,000 displaced people; a rehabilitation programme in the war-affected areas through food-for-work projects and involving non-governmental organizations and United Nations Volunteers; and a round-table meeting to be organized by UNDP to provide a forum for the Government of Djibouti and its partners to discuss and agree on a sustainable development strategy.

44. The preparatory process of the round table reached a climax with the finalization of a document on macroeconomic reforms. The paper, officially approved by the Council of Ministers in February 1995 and endorsed by the donor community, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, calls for far-reaching structural economic reforms and a major overhaul of the current institutional framework. The Government, in consultation with UNDP, set the date of the round-table meeting for 16 October 1995 at Geneva. This will allow ample time to refine (with the joint assistance of IMF, the World Bank and UNDP) the specifics of the policy measures contemplated by the Government.

45. In line with the recommendations of the Inter-Agency Mission, WFP prepared a draft project proposal, which deals with the emergency and rehabilitation programme for Djibouti. Initially, this proposal was to be submitted to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat for an appeal to the donor community. Instead, it was suggested that the report be submitted to the round-table meeting and the Government of Djibouti has concurred.

46. The Government of Djibouti continues to be seriously concerned about the presence in the country of a large number of refugees, displaced persons and illegal immigrants, victims of the instability, poverty and severe droughts witnessed by the subregion in recent years, who are putting heavy pressures on Djibouti's limited resources and overstretching the social and economic infrastructures. The authorities are estimating the number of these categories of persons at 120,000. Following an appeal made by the Government of Djibouti in early 1993 requesting the assistance of the international community to help Djibouti cope with the demographic burden the country is facing, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) agreed to transfer 30,000 refugees/displaced persons from the capital to the existing refugee camps, where care and maintenance will be provided to them pending their voluntary repatriation to Ethiopia and Somalia. Concurrent with the transfer operations was the establishment of a new registration system in order to have more accurate figures from the refugee camps, the participation of international specialized non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the refugee assistance programme and the improvement of the operational capacities and the financial management of the Office national d'assistance aux réfugiés et personnes sinistrées (ONARS), the principal implementing partner of the refugee programme in Djibouti.

47. Out of the targeted group of 30,000 persons, 15,000 were to be transferred to the camps as at 31 August 1995. Their number has increased the camp population to 40,000 persons (half of them Ethiopians and half Somalis) who were accommodated in four refugee camps, namely, Holl Holl, Ali Adde, Assamo and Aour Aoussa. The Somali refugees, who originated from Awdal Province in north-west Somalia, had fled their country as a result of internal conflicts and civil war, mainly following the downfall of the Siad Barre regime in 1991. The Ethiopian refugees entered Djibouti in 1991, following the collapse of the Mengisty regime and the subsequent civil disturbances. Most of the refugees in Djibouti are of nomadic background, the average size of the family is four persons and the women and children among them represent around 80 per cent of the overall refugee population. It should be noted that the frequent movements of the refugees between the camps and the city of Djibouti seeking better living conditions and job opportunities is resulting in additional pressures on the

already overcrowded city, exacerbating stress on basic services and making attempts to obtain accurate figures of the refugee population all the more difficult.

48. The living conditions in the refugee camps are at a minimal level and there are no prospects for the introduction of income-generating activities. The four camps are operated by ONARS and are located in sites that are barely accessible, close to the Ethiopian and Somali borders. Food assistance is provided by WFP, the medical and nutritional sectors are covered by the Association of Medical Doctors for Asia and the educational activities are covered by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). About 1,500 refugee children attend the camp schools. The Evangelical Protestant Church of Djibouti provides limited social assistance to urban refugees living in the town of Djibouti. In addition to its role of providing international protection to refugees, the UNHCR branch office in Djibouti funds and ensures the overall supervision and monitoring of the assistance programme. The initial assistance budget for 1995 is $1.5 million, not including the estimated $4 million in food assistance provided by WFP.

49. In the search for durable solutions to the refugee problem in Djibouti, two major repatriation programmes were initiated by UNHCR. Following several difficulties and delays, the programme of repatriation to Ethiopia was started on 26 September 1994 and allowed over 17,000 persons to be repatriated voluntarily to their country as at 20 March 1995. The repatriates were assisted by UNHCR and received food, non-food items, cash assistance and transportation. Rehabilitation works have been conducted in the areas of origin of the returnees under the cross-mandate approach. The programme resulted in the reduction of the camp population from 40,000 to 23,000 persons and in the closure of the Aour Aoussa camp on 28 February 1995. The programme of repatriation to Ethiopia will continue, with 15,000 persons to be transferred from the town of Djibouti. They will not be accommodated in the camps but will be given the possibility of voluntary repatriation to Ethiopia following a short transit period in a special centre erected by UNHCR for the purpose. This programme was expected to start in mid-1995 after all concerned parties, including the two Governments, have agreed on its modalities and timing.

50. Based on the relative stability that has gained momentum in the north-west region, a programme of repatriation to Somalia has been set up by UNHCR. In collaboration with the Government of Djibouti and the Hargeisa administration, a tripartite committee was established, as well as the terms of reference of the repatriation. As part of the confidence-building process, visits have been made to the villages of origin of the refugees in Awdal Province in order to assess the rehabilitation and reintegration needs. Information meetings with representatives of the refugees have been organized. Elders from the region of origin have been brought to Djibouti to visit the camps and meet with the intending returnees. A registration process conducted in the camps resulted in the registration of 15,418 volunteers for repatriation. As part of the rehabilitation programme, more than 100 quick-impact projects, comprising water, education, health, livestock and income-generating activities, have been launched by UNHCR and non-governmental organizations in north-west Somalia. Despite the progress achieved, the repatriation programme to north-west Somalia is, at present, stifled for various reasons that are mainly related to security

conditions, ethnic differences and the lack of an administration in charge of the region.

51. Owing to its position at the crossroads of the Horn of Africa, Djibouti has long been affected by circumstances in neighbouring countries. In 1993, about 5,532 metric tons of commodities, valued at about US$ 3 million, were made available by WFP to assist 30,000 Somali and Ethiopian refugees in the four camps. The number of refugees is expected to increase as the Government has opted to evacuate some families from urban centres to the camps.

52. WFP is also providing assistance to schools, hospitals and orphanages. School feeding is meant to improve the health and nutrition of children and to increase their energy and alertness, building a resource of educated people. Provision of school meals has been instrumental in increasing enrolment among rural children. In the past three years, more than 4,000 schoolchildren, 37 per cent of them girls, participated in the project. Similarly, food aid to the health sector acts as an incentive for out-patients to attend centres for continuous treatment against tuberculosis and as a budgetary saving by providing rations through hospital meals to in-patients. Over 3,000 recipients country-wide benefit from the food assistance. Funds saved as a result of WFP food donations serve to improve health facilities.

53. Concern about seeing beyond emergencies to long-term development accounts for the idea of food-for-work projects. The rationale behind these projects is that they provide additional food for those whose incomes are too low for them to have access to sufficient food for a healthy and productive life; the food supplied can also result in a substantial addition to their income. For this purpose, intensive infrastructure work has been undertaken in Djibouti by poor households, with food provided as an incentive. The objective of these multipurpose food-for-work projects is to assist schemes for the improvement of rural infrastructure, reforestation training and other activities aimed at increasing the self-reliance of the rural population. Food aid through food-for-work has created opportunities for about 2,000 recipients, 25 per cent of them women, in both rural and urban areas.

54. UNDP and WHO are very much involved in the fight against AIDS. In 1993, they contributed to the creation of a counselling unit that will help reduce the impact of the epidemic through education of the population and public sensitization and awareness programmes. The unit was established in the context of the National Committee for the Fight against AIDS, which UNDP has also supported by training its members through financing from the Special Programme Resources/AIDS Division (SPR/AIDS Division) and a field visit to three African countries where the AIDS epidemic is widespread (Zambia, Senegal and Uganda). In addition, a project proposal elaborated by the members of the National Committee is now under evaluation by the SPR/AIDS Division. In May 1995, UNDP and the Government signed a project document committing US$ 8,900 (out of indicative planning figure resources) to combat the human immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV) and AIDS pandemic. In the context of the United Nations/AIDS joint and co-sponsored programme, a thematic group, comprising all United Nations agencies concerned, has been established by the Resident Coordinator.

55. In July 1993, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs called the heads of the United Nations organizations concerned, including UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) for a meeting and officially declared the outbreak of cholera in Djibouti. The United Nations organizations, with the support of the French military bio-force, were actively engaged in responding to the epidemic. A nationwide surveillance system was established and mass campaigns of public health education and of reinforcing the training of health personnel were conducted. WHO consultants fielded for the emergency, as well as WHO projects staff in Djibouti, participated fully in the cholera control activities in the country. UNICEF also supported provision of oral rehydration salts and essential drugs. In regard to the reconstruction and development of Djibouti, WHO intends to assist the Government particularly in promoting maternal and child health in order to reduce mother and infant mortality, developing human resource capacity, improving managerial skills of personnel and involving the community in the promotion of health.

56. The main concern of the Government in the health sector is to create a health system accessible to all. To that end, an effort has been made to develop primary health care, to establish rural health centres and to train health staff.

57. UNICEF cooperation during the 1980s focused on the promotion and implementation of primary health care, especially for universal child immunization. It has also focused on the situation of women, in terms of their health, education and overall social status. UNICEF provided supplies and equipment for the country's maternal and child health centres and supported the training of nurses, midwives and traditional birth attendants. More than three quarters of women now have access to prenatal care and supervised deliveries. Yet, one of out every 20 pregnant women still dies of pregnancy-related causes because the quality of services is low, and the status of women remains low.

58. Extensive efforts have been made to empower women and girls through the national literacy/life skills programme, which was launched in 1991. The programme makes use of facilities and teachers from the formal school system and provides two-hour classes four evenings a week during the school year.

59. Government-UNICEF cooperation during the period 1994-1998 will include three interrelated and mutually supporting programmes: health; education; and advocacy and social planning. It will pursue four major goals: (a) to reduce the infant mortality rate from 113 infant deaths per 1,000 live births to 60, and the mortality rate for children under five years of age from 158 deaths per 1,000 live births to 80; (b) to reduce the maternal mortality rate from 740 deaths per 100,000 live births to 370; (c) to reduce severe and moderate malnutrition among children under five years of age by at least 50 per cent; and (d) to empower women and girls with the basic knowledge and skills needed for healthy living. These first three goals are based on the national programme of action and on the national five-year plan, 1991-1995, and the fourth was adopted in view of the inextricable link between basic education as an empowerment strategy and the overall well-being of mothers and children. All programme activities will be linked with these four national goals for children for the 1990s.

60. A project will be implemented in close cooperation with WHO to prevent HIV/AIDS by raising public awareness through the work of community health workers with high-risk groups.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

61. Djibouti's difficulties and problems are first and foremost related to the conflicts in the Horn of Africa, which have created a large movement of displaced populations and reduced the country's revenues as a result of loss of trade and services. In addition, the recurring emergency situations (drought, flood, epidemics), combined with large-scale destruction of livestock, water points, health and education facilities as a result of the war in the country, have considerably increased Djibouti's emergency and humanitarian needs.

62. As a result of a major repatriation programme to Ethiopia and a more stringent national policy, the pressure from refugees, displaced persons and illegal immigrants has been somewhat alleviated. However, the problem of displaced persons resulting from the civil strife (1991-1993) remains and needs to be adequately addressed through specific actions, including the rehabilitation of affected areas and reintegration schemes for the returnees. As to the remaining refugees in Djibouti (most of whom are of Somali origin) UNHCR will continue to seek, in partnership with all concerned, durable solutions to their plight.

63. In this respect, the most feasible long-term solution to the presence of the refugees in Djibouti would require regional political agreements that would enable these immigrants to return to their countries and keep potential newcomers in their places of origin. This long-term action would require the formal political commitment of the concerned countries and could be facilitated by the United Nations system in close cooperation with the Djibouti-based Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development.

64. There is also an urgent need to support the Government's demobilization programme through budgetary support in order to alleviate the financial constraints of demobilizing thousands of military personnel. The demobilization of military personnel is a major issue which needs to be addressed in a larger context of rehabilitation and development. The Inter-Agency Mission expressed the strong belief that demobilization was a necessary condition to the restoration of peace, stability and national reconciliation. It would encourage the internally displaced people to regain confidence and return to their homes. It would also alleviate the heavy financial burden on the national budget.

65. The immediate need is for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged or destroyed social infrastructures (schools, dispensaries, water facilities) in all regions that have been affected by civil strife. External assistance sources will be requested to provide the necessary financial support, as well as equipment and materials, needed for the reconstruction phase.

66. In order to initiate the rehabilitation process, an effort will need to be made by the authorities to encourage displaced populations to return to the towns and villages they have left before serious efforts are made to restore

public services. In this way, community participation in the renovated facilities will instil in the community itself a sense of pride and ownership in the running and maintenance of services at the local level.

67. The Government is facing critical difficulties resulting from the civil strife in the country in the past few years. It is estimated that at least $30 million will be urgently needed to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the war. In order to alleviate the financial difficulties, the Government has initiated a demobilization process involving some 12,000 military personnel. However, as this process will take several years to complete, it is appropriate to plan short-term budgetary aid and to assist in the economic and social reintegration of the demobilized personnel.

68. The large numbers of primary school drop-outs, who have insufficient skills to enter a restricted labour market, and the increasing number of young illiterates suggest a problem that needs serious consideration. The challenge will be to try to reform the educational system in order to make it less costly, more accessible and more relevant to the needs of the country. Unless more effort is made to educate and train Djiboutians, the kind of manpower development challenges now facing the country's fragile and declining economy will be difficult to meet, both in the short and the long term.

69. In order to understand better the emergency situation, it is important to assess separately the short-term needs of the different population groups, namely refugees, illegal immigrants, internally displaced persons and demobilized soldiers.

70. Refugees include a population of 35,000 in the camps as well as 22,500 who are expected to be transferred from the capital city of Djibouti to the camps in the near future. These refugees are presently assisted by UNHCR.

71. While a comprehensive survey should be carried out to ascertain the precise nature of the damage incurred and to determine what equipment is required, reports from the authorities suggest that a number of schools and dispensaries in Obock and Tadjoura districts require immediate attention.

72. A well-coordinated action by the local authorities and the active participation of returnees, including the demobilized soldiers, may secure the financial and technical support needed to get the job done quickly and effectively. In this regard, a number of projects could be initiated or reactivated in the following sectors: basic urban infrastructure maintenance, road construction and maintenance, afforestation and reforestation, water points maintenance, wells. This would also alleviate the critical unemployment situation as it would allow greater access to economic opportunities. Food aid would be an incentive for the former soldiers and returnees to participate in the rehabilitation activities. The Government has also expressed its preference for "cash and food-for-work" over free food distribution.

73. Such a rehabilitation programme would require an international presence in the affected areas in order to provide the necessary technical support and, more importantly, a sense of security and confidence to the population. In this context, UNDP could serve as the coordinating body for a cross-mandate operation

on behalf of all United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Volunteers, enlisting their active support in specific area- and community-based rehabilitation and reconstruction schemes. A phased-approach strategy should be adopted in harmony with the return of the displaced population and the pace of the demobilization process. The Inter-Agency Mission expressed the belief that the proposed rehabilitation programme would contribute to the restoration of peace and stability and would have a positive impact on the living conditions of the population.

74. In conjunction with the rehabilitation programme and as soon as the majority of the displaced persons have returned, reconstruction projects with high labour intensity would be initiated, both for public socio-economic infrastructure and private properties (housing, farms, shops, etc.).

75. These projects could be realized by small private contractors, with the strong participation of the communities. Measures would have to be taken to support the creation of micro-enterprises in all branches of activities (commerce, agriculture, fisheries, services, crafts), with an emphasis on the use of a technology appropriate to the local conditions and the use of credit and other financing mechanisms (fonds de garantie). The organizations of the United Nations system present in Djibouti are constantly dealing with that problem by developing activities related to repatriation, food distribution and education, as well as by initiating regrouping efforts to resettle refugees in camps, and by clean-up operations in the capital.

76. However, inappropriate curricula, which still reflect French educational values and not the reality of the local culture, continue to cast doubt on both the quality and relevance of what is being learned in schools by Djiboutian children. The heavy emphasis on French language acquisition at the expense of mother tongue learning in the earlier primary grades may also be contributing to the overall low achievement levels being measured in mathematics and science skills among the majority of Djiboutian children sitting French public examinations.

77. Djibouti does not provide university education, except for two courses in management and international commerce, which can be taken at the Djibouti High School, and an advanced teacher-training course in arts and literature taught by visiting professors from the University of Montpelier in France, which started in 1991/92. The large majority of students qualifying for higher education go to France on scholarships supplied by the Government, French institutions or from French aid. In 1993, 565 students received national scholarships, while about 23 per cent qualified for French aid scholarships. An attempt to de-externalize and localize further and higher education is receiving some support, but a lot more needs to be done to rethink higher education needs in the light of changing demands for higher-level manpower in a modern economy.

78. The Secretary-General remains deeply committed to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 49/21 F. He calls upon the international community to provide financial support to enable him to provide technical assistance for meeting urgent socio-economic programmes for the reconstruction and development process in Djibouti.